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Date:

August 7, 2001

By:

James H. Miller

DOCKET NO.: 4600-0183.26

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF:

Reyes, *et al.*

SERIAL No.: 09/851,410

FILED: May 7, 2001

FOR: **DNA SEQUENCES OF ENTERICALLY
TRANSMITTED NON-A/NON-B HEPATITIS
VIRAL AGENT**

EXAMINER: Unknown

ART UNIT: Unknown

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Before examination of the above-referenced continuation patent application, please amend the application as follows:

In The Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-24, and add claims 25-41 below.

25. (New) An isolated protein encoded by an open reading frame (ORF) in a hepatitis E virus (HEV) genome, said protein prepared by

(a) introducing into a host cell an expression vector comprising a polynucleotide sequence that is greater than 70% identical with the sequence presented as SEQ ID NO:6; and

(b) expressing said protein.